

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
OFFICE OF FISCAL AND MANAGEMENT ANALYSIS**

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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 7032**

**BILL NUMBER:** SB 312

**NOTE PREPARED:** Jan 5, 2004

**BILL AMENDED:**

**SUBJECT:** Covenant Marriages.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Sen. Clark

**FIRST SPONSOR:**

**BILL STATUS:** As Introduced

**FUNDS AFFECTED:** ☒ **GENERAL**  
☐ **DEDICATED**  
☐ **FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State & Local

STATE IMPACT	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006
State Revenues			
State Expenditures	7,095	18,095	
Net Increase (Decrease)	(7,095)	(18,095)	

**Summary of Legislation:** This bill defines "covenant marriage". The bill provides that couples may designate a covenant marriage when applying for a marriage license or after marriage. It requires a marriage license to indicate whether the marriage is a covenant marriage. It also establishes the procedure for declaring a covenant marriage. The bill requires the State Department of Health to maintain records of covenant marriage declarations. The bill further provides limited grounds for legal separation or dissolution of a covenant marriage. It requires the State Department of Health to develop an informational pamphlet regarding covenant marriage.

**Effective Date:** Upon passage.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** The State Department of Health (SDOH) has identified some minimal costs to develop a new form for circuit courts to use to implement the new classification of covenant marriage and in creating the pamphlet providing information on covenant marriage required by the bill. Both of these costs can be absorbed within the existing SDOH budget. The Department also estimates that this bill would require approximately \$7,095 to implement in the first year for printing and postage expenditures

since the bill is effective upon passage. An additional \$7,095 for printing and postage would be required in the second year, as well as \$11,000 for one-time systems revisions. The State Department of Health is in the process of converting the Vital Records system to an electronic, web-based system. Once the vital records system is completed and operational, no printing and postage costs would subsequently be incurred for the purposes of this bill.

*Background Information:* The Department of Health reverted \$7,568,011 to the General Fund in FY 2003.

**Explanation of State Revenues:**

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:** The county circuit court clerks may incur some additional expenses related to filing covenant marriage designations for existing marriages.

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** State Department of Health.

**Local Agencies Affected:** Circuit Courts; Circuit Court Clerks.

**Information Sources:** Zach Cattell, Legislative Liaison for the State Department of Health, (317) 233-2170.

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